
**Early Learning & Children's
Services Committee**

HB 1256

Brief Description: Preventing serious injury and strangulation from window blind cords or other significant safety hazards in child care settings.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Kagi, Hunter, O'Brien and Ericks.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the use of window blinds or other window coverings with certain types of pull cords that may pose a risk of strangulation to young children in care settings.
- Requires periodic review of minimum requirements related to safety of child care settings.

Hearing Date: 2/2/07

Staff: Chris Alejano (786-7115).

Background:

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from more than 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. Among the current products on the CPSC's most wanted list are lane cedar chests, old cribs, and window blinds.

Since 1991, the CPSC received reports of 174 strangulations involving cords on window blinds: 152 strangulations involved the outer pull cords, which raise and lower the blind, and 22 involved the inner cords that run through the blind slats. The Window Covering Safety Council (WCSC), in cooperation with the CPSC, recalled millions of window plans with pull cords and inner cords that can form a loop and cause strangulation. In addition, window covering manufacturers have produced redesigned products to reduce cord hazards.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) is responsible for establishing the minimum child care licensing requirements related to the safety of child care premises. Licensed child care providers must maintain the building, equipment, and premises in a safe manner that protects children from injury hazard. Among those hazards are burns; drowning; choking; and cuts.

In early December 2005, Jaclyn Frank, an eighteen-month-old baby girl from Washington State, got caught in the cords of a blind inside of the residential day care home where she was being cared for and died from strangulation. The owner of the day care was unaware that the blinds near the crib where Jaclyn was sleeping could have strangled the baby.

Summary of Bill:

An additional safety requirement for child care licensing is added to address the safety of window coverings. The prohibition of the use of window blinds or other window coverings with pull cords or inner cords capable of forming a loop and posing a risk of strangulation to young children is added to the minimum safety requirements for child care licensing.

In addition, the DEL will consider the CPSC's most wanted list of child safety recommendations when developing and reviewing the minimum requirements related to safety of child care settings.

The bill will be known and cited as the Jaclyn Frank act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.